

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Prior to this Amendment, Claims 1-28 were pending in this application, with Claims 1, 4, 10 and 16 being independent. It is gratefully acknowledged that the Examiner has allowed Claims 4-15 and found allowable subject matter in Claims 19-28.

As indicated above, Claims 16, 20 and 22 have been amended and Claims 1-3 and 19 are cancelled without prejudice. No new matter has been presented. Claims 4-18 and 20-28 are now pending, with Claims 1, 4, 10 and 16 as independent claims.

In the Office Action, Claims 1-3 and 16-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Gao* (U.S. Pub. No 2003/0076793 A1) in view of *Sawyer et al.* (U.S. 6,539,004).

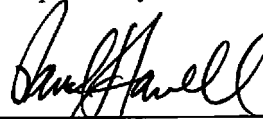
Regarding the 103(a) rejection of Claim 16, Claim 16 has been amended to include the recitations of dependent Claim 19, which was found to include allowable subject matter. Therefore, Claim 16 is allowable for at least the same reasons as dependent Claim 19. Accordingly, withdrawal of the §103(a) rejection of Claim 16 is respectfully requested.

Claim 17-18 and 20-28 are each dependent, either directly or indirectly, from independent Claim 16. While not conceding the patentability of the dependent claims, *per se*, it is respectfully submitted that these dependent claims are also believed to be patentable for at least the same reasons as set forth above for independent Claim 16.

Again, it is gratefully acknowledged that Claims 4-15 are allowed and the Examiner has found allowable subject matter in Claims 19-28.

Accordingly, all of the claims pending in the Application, namely, Claims 4-18 and 20-28, are believed to be in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference or personal interview would facilitate resolution of any remaining matters, the Examiner may contact Applicant's attorney at the number given below.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul J. Farrell", written over a horizontal line.

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